

# Division Soldiers Answer the Nation's Call

Story and photos by Sgt. Erich Langer

NORMAN, Okla. — In numerous ceremonies across the division's area of operations, the 95th Division (IT) mobilized soldiers in support of on-going Army **Operations Enduring Freedom/Noble Eagle**. A total of about 80 soldiers from Oklahoma, Texas,



Missouri, and Louisiana, were deployed in early March.

Soldiers assigned to the 1st Bn., 379th Regt. in Oklahoma City, Okla., 3rd Bn., 378th Regt. in Norman, Okla., 1st Bn. (Engineer), 95th Regt. at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo., 2nd Bn., 354th Regt., Grand Prairie, Texas, and 10th Bn., 5th Bde., San Antonio, Texas, were among the units called to active duty. Additional mobilizations of individual soldiers with essential Military Occupational Skills (MOS) were also deployed.

"Previous generations fought in World War I, World War II and other conflicts and now we have the *War On Terrorism* — the perpetrators picked the wrong country," said U.S. Representative Tom Cole (R-Norman), as he addressed a large gathering of deploying 95th soldiers and family members at the Joe A. Smalley Reserve Center in Norman. "Your sense of service, dedication and concern is an enormous tribute to your families."

Family and friends made up a large portion of those in attendance. In fact, the Family Readiness Group served a homemade cake — emblazoned with the unit's regimental crest — punch, snacks and balloons. They also "served up" a healthy dose of encouragement and support to soldiers and fellow family members saying good-bye.

"We recognize it is so vitally important to take care of families," said Maj. Gen. Robert S. Silverthorn, Jr., commander of the 95th Div. (IT). "It is imperative that our soldiers understand that their families are being taken care of back home. Service members shouldn't have to worry about what's going on at home when they can't be there."

"I love my job and I am looking forward to doing what I am trained to do," said Staff Sgt. Melvin Nolin, "I've got a wife and two children I will be leaving behind. It is always hard to do. It is a big sacrifice for the families because they stay here; but, in a way they're actually going down with us." Nolin and his fellow 378th Bn. soldiers are deploying to Fort Sill, Okla.



Congressman Cole, a first-term congressman, who serves Oklahoma on the House of Representative's Armed Services Committee, knows first-hand about military service. His father retired as a non-commissioned officer – and now his brother serves.

“Soldiers, I respect you for your sense of duty and dedication; and, families I thank you for your diligence and your support — you are the heroes, you’re the ones who make the difference,” said Cole.

“The 95th has a proud lineage. You are now about to add another chapter and we all look forward to reading those pages. You are in fact ‘Twice the Citizen,’” said Silverthorn.

Mobilized soldiers have a variety of Military Occupational Skills (MOS) and will be deployed in numerous capacities. Activation orders are for one year.

